

**Abstract 468**

**TITLE:** Characteristics of Injection Drug Users and Their Sex Partners Tested at Public HIV Testing Sites in California

**AUTHORS:** Heusner, CM; Griffin, EJ; Truax SR (California Department of Health Services, Office of AIDS)

**BACKGROUND/OBJECTIVES:** Assess the reported HIV risk behavior and HIV prevalence among self-identified injection drug users (IDUs) and non-IDUs with IDU partners in California.

**METHODS:** The California HIV Counseling Information System was revised in 1997 to improve risk assessment and data collection procedures. These data now provide the most detailed and systematic HIV risk behavior surveillance information available for testing clients. Analyses are based on nearly 60,000 HIV client visits in which clients reported past or present injection drug use and clients who are non-IDU indicated an IDU partner. Data were collected between July 1997 and December 1998 at publicly funded test sites in California.

**RESULTS:** The positivity rate for all IDUs was 2%. Non-IDU clients with IDU partners had a positivity rate of 1.5%. Both are higher than the positivity rate reported for all other clients (1.2%). African Americans represented 28.43% of all positives; however, they represented 13.69% of IDUs. Among first-time testers, African Americans represented 11.88% of the sample, but 38.16% of positives. White males and females represent 57% of all IDUs while Latino/a males and females represent 22%. The majority of IDUs sometimes or never clean their works (69%) and also share needles (71%). Approximately 18% of both IDUs and non-IDUs with IDU partners reported six or more sexual partners in the past year. Over 75% of IDUs had one or more prior HIV tests. Nearly one-third have received IDU treatment in the past and another third are currently receiving treatment (n=29,144). IDUs tested more often at Alternative Test Sites (26.84%) and through a mobile van (16.34%). The majority of IDU clients and non-IDU clients with IDU partners are not using condoms. Between 74% and 88% never used barriers during vaginal sex for different partner groups. Condom use was slightly higher for anal insertive and anal receptive sex. For anal insertive sex with an HIV+ partner (n=975), 2% reported never or only sometimes using a barrier.

**CONCLUSIONS:** IDUs and their partners continue to demonstrate elevated risk for HIV infection. Of particular significance is the proportion of African American IDUs testing positive for HIV. IDUs and their partners appear to be at risk from both injection drug use behaviors and unprotected sexual behaviors with high-risk partners. The data suggest that there is a continuing need for evaluation of specific injection and sexual risk behaviors as well as a need for development of strategies focused on injection and sexual behavior change among IDUs and their partners.

**PRESENTER CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Name:** Christine Heusner

**Address:** Office of AIDS

P.O. Box 942732

Sacramento, CA 94234-7320

**Telephone:** (916) 323-4321

**Fax:** (916) 323-4642

**E-mail:** struax@dhs.ca.gov